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- PRESS RELEASE -

**BYSIEWICZ RE-LAUNCHES ‘SAFE AT HOME’
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT
VICTIMS’ ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM**

NEARLY 100 VICTIMS’ ADVOCATES TRAINED ACROSS CONNECTICUT AS PART
OF STATEWIDE AWARENESS EFFORT

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz was joined today by legislators, state agency officials, and victims’ advocates to announce the re-launch of her office’s Safe at Home’ Address Confidentiality Program for victims of crimes such as domestic violence and sexual assault.

“By the end of the day, on average, 55 more people will become victims of domestic violence – by the end of the year more than 600 people will report that they were victims of a forcible rape in Connecticut,” said Bysiewicz. “The Safe at Home Program can help break the chain that allows abusers to find their victims by tracking their address through public records. Through this program, victims of domestic violence and other crimes can prevent their families from potential harm.”

Since 2004, the Safe at Home program has offered Connecticut residents who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, or threat of injury the peace of mind in having their actual residence address kept

confidential by utilizing the Secretary of the State's office for mail forwarding services. To create more awareness about this program, the Office of the Secretary of the State will engage additional outreach partners, disseminate materials in both English and Spanish, sponsor various regional information meetings, and implement a variety of trainings through a partnership with state agencies and local community-based programs to expand the level of participation.

“The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is proud to be a part of the Secretary of the State's Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program,” said Lisa Holden, Executive Director of CCADV. “We are anticipating that many of the women, and their children, who seek services at our member programs throughout Connecticut will be able to benefit from the project. We are ready to spread the word across the state, and ready to assist those who may find security and safety through Safe at Home.”

“Privacy, and the ability to control personal information, is fundamental to healing and safety for sexual assault survivors,” said Laura Cordes, Director of Policy & Advocacy for Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services. “The Safe at Home program is a tool that can provide sexual assault survivors with the ability to keep their new home address private. It is one less thing for a survivor to worry about.”

Besides forwarding participants' mail, the Office of the Secretary of the State also serves as Agent for Service of Process to those enrolled in the program. The law requires all state agencies and other government offices and entities to honor a participant's request to have their government-related mail forwarded to the Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program address instead of an actual home address. These government offices and agencies cannot reveal the actual address of any participant in the program since they must utilize the ACP address provided to them by the program participant unless otherwise instructed by the participant.

Although not obligated to do so, private companies and businesses such as utility and insurance companies as well as employers have the option of honoring the protections this program affords to its participants.